

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Roy Stearns
State Parks
(916) 654-7538

Hilda Delgado
Los Angeles
(213) 978-0741

April 3, 2003

Addressing the Need for Urban Recreation

State Parks and City of Los Angeles Working to put Recreational Fields at Taylor Yard

SACRAMENTO – California State Parks and the City of Los Angeles are moving closer to finding a way to put recreational fields on the recently purchased State Parks property known as Taylor Yard. The City and State Parks are now discussing potential land exchanges that will turn over part of Taylor Yard to the City of Los Angeles and make recreational fields a reality for the former railroad yard.

“We are working closely with the City of Los Angeles on land exchanges,” said Acting State Park Director Ruth Coleman, “because the City has more experience with providing for and operating local recreational activities, like soccer fields. Therefore, it makes sense to us to explore land exchanges to provide a win-win situation for the city and those who want local recreation on this site. We are also working with Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg on legislation needed to make this happen.”

“My bill, Assembly Bill 413,” said Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg, D-Los Angeles, “facilitates a land exchange between the City of Los Angeles and State Parks to provide much needed ‘active recreation’ at Taylor Yard. We need to use our urban parks for soccer and baseball as well as the traditional uses long a hallmark of our State Park System.”

“This is a great opportunity and we are pleased to explore ways to bring more recreational spaces for our neediest communities,” said Los Angeles Mayor Jim Hahn.

Los Angeles City Councilman Ed Reyes, who represents Council District One, where Taylor Yard is located, likewise expressed a commitment to the land exchange process. Said

Reyes; “The City is pleased to be working with State Parks to meet the needs of the community.”

In this land exchange process, the City is looking for land it presently owns that may be more suited for State Park use. The City and State Parks are now examining several parcels for a potential trade. The City would then be free to begin the process of designing, building and operating recreational fields at Taylor Yard in the City of Los Angeles, Council District One (Council Member Ed Reyes’ District)

In June 2000 Governor Gray Davis designated funds for California State Parks to purchase properties along the Los Angeles River, the goal being to begin the process of creating a Los Angeles River Parkway. At Taylor Yard, 40 acres was purchased and State Parks is negotiating to purchase more land adjacent to the Los Angeles River to add to the parkway. By stepping in to buy the first 40 acres of Taylor Yard, State Parks insured that it would not be lost as a critically needed park site in this under-served downtown neighborhood.

Since then, State Parks has held two public meetings with stakeholders and community members. People attending those meetings have said a part of the Taylor Yard site should go toward meeting the critical shortage for organized sports and recreational needs in the surrounding communities. The process to fill this need is now underway, with both the City and State Parks committed to finding ways to meet the local community needs.

This land exchange proposal for recreational fields at Taylor Yard would not eliminate other park uses on the site. At the two public meetings mentioned previously, dozens of stakeholders and community members also voiced strong desires for other park features and services at Taylor Yard. Many who spoke called for a variety of passive outdoor recreational opportunities, like walking and running paths, bike trails, riparian areas, picnic areas, natural wildlife habitat areas and more. In the forthcoming planning process for the park, the public will again have the opportunity to provide input and comment on such uses for the future park site.

#